

2021 North Hampton Recreation Adult Co-Ed Softball League Rules

This season we will strictly adhere to the COVID-19 Amateur sports guideline

<https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt381/files/inline-documents/2020-05/guidance-amateur-youth-sports.pdf>

Dearborn Park-No dogs, No Alcohol, No Exceptions. Game time 6pm

As is the policy with all North Hampton Parks and Recreation programs, the emphasis in the softball league is on fun, participation, and inclusion. Please be aware that unsportsmanlike conduct will **not** be tolerated and could lead to either a suspension or expulsion from the league. Teams are expected to “work out” any situations that may arise. This league will not have umpires during the regular season. **Base coaches at first and third may be used for deciding any close plays. Please be sure to assign base coaches who are comfortable being honest and decisive with their call.** Catchers will call strikes, and fair or foul down the line with help from others, Base coaches will call out or safe at first and 3rd. This system will work well especially with those who want to be part of an inclusive, fun, recreational softball league. Umpires will be used for the playoffs, using the same rules.

1. **All players must be registered** and have completed a “Waiver” before being allowed to play in a game. Register online at Northhamptonnh.recdesk.com or request a hard copy registration form and pay with a check. Registration forms are available on the town of North Hampton website, or per request
2. **Game Length:** Games are seven innings long. If the game is tied after seven innings extra innings may be played for as long as there is enough daylight to do so safely. Games postponed due to inclement weather will not be made up unless both teams agree to a makeup. Please do not play in any rain conditions that are unsafe or damaging to the fields. Home team is team listed second on the schedule. Home team gets first base dugout.
3. **Bats and Softballs:** **This year as a COVID-19 compliance, players will use their own bats**
Softballs will be provided to teams and each team will use their softballs on defense.
Softballs will be restrictive flight with a MAX 375 lbs. and MAX .47 COR specifications. Men will hit using wooden softball bats, and women can hit with metal or wooden bats.
5. **Pitching & Batting:** Most slow pitch rules apply. Pitchers must pitch a slow-arc'd pitch, 6-12' not flat or fast. With no called balls, pitchers are expected to throw strikes. The distance from the pitcher's mound to home plate is ASA adult slow pitch recommended 50' distance. Catchers will call strikes. If a pitch of proper arc hits the mat *and/or* the plate it will be called a strike. There is no leading, stealing, bunting, or “slap hitting”. A foul ball on a third strike counts as a strikeout only if it is the second foul ball on a third strike. Any player at any time can ask to have a ten-ball count placed on a pitcher. If a pitcher then throws ten balls in any single at bat, that pitcher will lose his/her pitching eligibility for that game. The batter will then have the choice of going directly to second base with any runners affected moving up two bases as well or starting with a new count from the new pitcher.

6. **Gender Balance Batting Order Rule:** Females must be 50% of the order by the fourth batter and continue until all female batters are exhausted. In the event of a player showing up after a game has started, they will be placed last in the batting order regardless of where their team currently is in their batting order, or their gender. If a team does not have a minimum of three females in their lineup, then they may only play with nine in the field and will be given an out after the 5th batter each time thru their lineup.
7. **Batting order and Substitutions: Everyone bats throughout the game and the batting order is continuous and never changes** Players in the field, and subsequent substitutions will be determined by teams batting order. For instance, if a team has 3 substitutions (a total of 13 players), then the first 3 players that sit on the bench defensively, will be the first 3 batters. This pattern will continue throughout the game. Players that get less time in the field potentially get more at bats, and vice versa. However, this does not displace the gender balance batting order rule. This does not mean that through the normal substitutions a team always has to have a certain number of females in the field.
8. **Base-running:** When running the bases on any tag “play”, players are expected to slide, avoid contact, or give up the out.
Runners shall be declared out if there is any type of interference or collision without a slide.
Metal cleats are **NOT** legal.
Base runners will wait until the ball is struck before leaving the base.
Once the ball is at the pitcher’s plate or in the circle (playoffs) baserunners must immediately return to the nearest base or shall be called out.

Pinch runners may be used if a player has an injury. If done it is only done once the batter has safely reached a base. The pinch runner will be the last batter who hit into an out or the last batter in the lineup if there has not been an out recorded.

ALL plays at home plate are force plays. There will be a line painted 20 feet past 3rd base towards home plate, if a runner crosses or touches that line, he/she is committed to going home. Runners will use the second home plate or line away from the fielder, and the catcher should only use the original home plate. **Not the mat extension** Catchers or defensive players must have contact with home plate to record any force outs.
9. **Distance Line:** All outfielders must be behind the distance line, painted 165 feet from home plate, until the ball is hit. This is for all batters. This rule is designed to keep outfielders honest and not crowding towards the infield. Batters should be awarded a base hit for any violations. There must be two infielders on both sides of second base. (No 3 infielders on one side)
10. **Homerun Rule:** Maximum of three over the fence homeruns allowed per team per game. Beginning with the fourth team homerun and each subsequent team homerun the batter shall be declared out. This is for over the fence automatic homeruns only.
11. **All participants must be rostered players.** If a non-rostered player plays, that game shall be forfeited. If teams want to play after a game has been forfeited due to a team not having enough players they may do so, but the game is already forfeited.
Managers should exchange lineups before the game.

12. **Records and Playoffs:** Pairings will be based on winning percentage. Seeding tiebreaker will be as follows

1. Head to head,
2. Record against teams above you,
3. Coin flip.

All teams should be prepared to play any nights the week of the playoffs. Seedings, weather makeups etc can all be factors in the schedule. In the event of a rainout the schedule will remain the same unless/until the rained-out game needs to be played to determine the rest of the playoff schedule. If there are an uneven number of teams in the league, the two lowest ranked teams will play on the first evening of the playoffs with the number one seed facing the winner of that game the following evening.

Please send any questions you may have to Joe Manzi, North Hampton Parks and Recreation
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